

August 2011



Lansing Area Chapter Safari Club International Newsletter

Chapter Fundraiser Auction Items Provide Memories

As a member of Safari Club International, you are aware of the importance of our annual fundraising banquet and that the proceeds support our many humanitarian, educational, and conservation projects. We support our Veterans and the Tony Semple Foundation, we send educators to the AWLS Ranch, and the list goes on and on. Here are a couple stories of appreciation from successful bidders of auction items donated by our own chapter members. All of you who purchased hunts at our fundraiser are encouraged to write a short article and/or send photographs not only because the other members are interested, but also to give our generous donors a little recognition, thanks and support. Without their generosity, we would not be able to fund our many and varied projects. Thanks for taking a few minutes to send in your pictures and stories.

Special Mother's Day

By Stephanie Westenfeld

Mother's Day was very unique and extra special this year. Joel and I invited our parents to our home and Jim and Sally Ellis prepared an exciting and delicious Wild Game Dinner. We were so happy we bid on it at the SCI banquet and were able to walk away with the game dinner.



Jim and Sally didn't have far to drive; in fact, they didn't have to leave the subdivision, but they sure had a lot of food to carry in when they arrived. Our

parents, being hunters and having eaten everything from rattlesnakes to mountain lion, were looking forward to a catered game dinner.

The night began with appetizers and hearing hunting adventures of how the game we were eating was taken. Then, we moved to the shrimp bisque and it was followed by a crisp mandarin green salad. We talked about the variety of game animals we have eaten -- some animals I didn't know even existed. The main course was Venison Roulades, Apricot Pheasant, and Wild Boar Jerk. We had read about Jim and Sally's Wild Boar adventure in Florida in April's newsletter and found that was the boar we were eating. We concluded our meal with Wild Berry Pie and French vanilla ice cream.



I was shocked when all the dishes were washed by Jim and Sally. Our moms really liked that part. Our moms received a copy of Jim's cookbook, *Wild & Tame, Domestic & Game*. Before the night was over, they had picked out recipes to try.

Thank you, Jim and Sally Ellis, for the amazing Wild Game Dinner. The service, food, and company were perfection. Thank you for donating your service, time, and game for the support of SCI. Our moms were happy with their Mother's day extravaganza!

Walleye Fishing in Lake Erie

By Sally and Jim Ellis

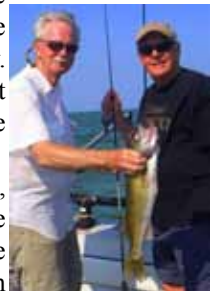
Before last year's fundraiser, we talked and realized it had been a couple years since we had purchased a hunt or other adventure at our fundraisers, so we set a goal -- we were going to buy an adventure and support the Lansing Area Chapter of SCI. And we had success . . . in fact, lots of success, counting silent auction purchases as well as live auction bids.



On the live auction, we managed to get a turkey hunt in southern Michigan, a red stag hunt in Argentina (which we are hoping to take in April, 2012), and Dr. Jerry Schave's yearly walleye fishing donation.

Since we sold our cottages and boats a number of years ago, we had not been fishing for a long time and were very excited to be the winning bidders and to win the trip. Due to some scheduling conflicts on both sides, we could not get the trip coordinated until mid-July. It was hot . . . really hot . . . 95 degrees . . . and it was late in the season, but we were confident; we were in good hands!

We met Captain Jerry and his first mate, Dr. George Bohart, at Harbor Side Marina where Jerry keeps his boat -- a 27-foot Sportcraft. We headed out toward West Sister Island filled with anticipation. On the way out, we traded hunting stories and learned about some of George's work as an animal anesthesiologist at Michigan State University. Upon arriving at "the spot," Jerry set the lines and we started trolling for walleyes. We had a successful trip, boating several walleyes in spite of the near 100 degree heat and 82 degree surface water temperature. The highlight of the trip was when Jerry said, "Fish on," and Sally grabbed the rod and reeled in a 5 lb. small mouth bass. That's part of the fun of fishing -- there always are surprises.



We would like to thank Jerry Schave for his continuous support of the Lansing Area Chapter and we are already planning on joining Jerry for another fishing trip next year.

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President's Message

by Ron Lanford

I was out spraying Roundup on my food plots and, like usual, my mind wasn't riveted on the task at hand. Instead, it was centered on the hunting trip from which I just returned. Jim Houthoofd and I hunted in Texas for exotics with Bill Figge and W4 Hunting & Fishing. We had a great time and took some fantastic animals, but that's not what was stuck in my mind. I knew that I was tremendously impressed with what I saw at Bill's booth at the SCI convention in Reno, but I couldn't figure out exactly what I was feeling about him and his operation. I was out spraying Roundup on my food plots and, like usual, my mind wasn't riveted on the task at hand. Instead, it was centered on the hunting trip from which I just returned. Jim Houthoofd and I hunted in Texas for exotics with Bill Figge and W4 Hunting & Fishing. We had a great time and took some fantastic animals, but that's not what was stuck in my mind. I knew that I was tremendously impressed with what I saw at Bill's booth at the SCI convention in Reno, but I couldn't figure out exactly what I was feeling about him and his operation. I finally figured out that it was admiration.

Please indulge me for a few minutes. I think all of us admire the game animals that we hunt and the sometimes grand locations in which we hunt them. I don't think non-hunters are capable of grasping how we can admire wildlife but shoot them, but I think I can give you an idea of some of my thinking. I admire a few people who some of you know. The person I've admired the longest is my beautiful bride, Dawn. I knew and was friends with Dawn for quite a while before we got together, and it amazed me how she managed her career and home, being a very successful

single parent long before it was an accepted thing to do. She did it all by herself too without asking for help from anyone. The best thing that ever happened for me was to get her into my life, and I should probably quit telling people that I take her with me everywhere I go because she's so damned homely I can't stand to kiss her goodbye.

I also have been fortunate to become friends with and truly admire Jim & Janet Leonard. What can you say other than they are nice people. I think serving on the Humanitarian Services committee for national SCI is a natural for them, and it's cool to see how they truly care about people and give unselfishly of themselves to help and make life better for others. Another one who obviously comes by it naturally is their son, Mike. I like to tell people who comment on Mike's business success about how he started out having to camp out on a buddy's apartment floor and have his car double as his delivery

van so that he could scrape by. Mike always seems to be looking for kids, friends, or strangers that he can help. He's very committed to our chapter, and he's also committed to the Tony Semple Foundation and those great kids. The Leonards certainly set a high standard -- one that I'll never attain -- and we're very lucky to know them.

I also admire Larry Higgins. Larry is a vice president on the SCI executive board and is a great guy. I certainly admire his hunting prowess and applaud him for his selection of International Hunter of the year with SCI. But he isn't a showoff. He's a down to earth guy who has been very successful. He and his wife, Cindy, hosted a small group of kids from our chapter on a doe hunt at Red Pine Whitetails, his hunting ranch. My grandson Brett was one of the lucky kids, and was the first one to harvest a doe on that trip. Larry treated those kids like they were the most important clients he ever had. It really made me feel great when he told an international audience at his award presentation that his favorite hunt was the one where they hosted our kids.

Guy Antilla is an outfitter who I greatly admire. Guy arrived in Canada with a very small amount of money in his pocket and no ability to speak English. He recently sold both of his guide territories and the air service and planes he owned in British Columbia. Fortunately for many hunters, he's going to continue guiding for the new owner. I was able to spend time with Guy on my late season moose hunt and I hold that as one of my best trips, even though I didn't bring a moose home. I'm proud to have Guy as my friend, and I hope to spend time in the mountains with him again soon.

That brings me around to Bill Figge. Bill runs the W4 with his wife and daughter, Romy and Claire. Bill does all of the guiding himself and only takes one person or one group at a time. Romy does all of the cooking and cleaning. Talk about individualized service! I first noticed him at the convention where the entire wall space was taken up by posters of huge animals his clients have taken with him. Bill is known for his blackbuck and takes world class animals. He has other beautiful animals on his ranch, but also hunts other ranches for species that he doesn't have and does his best to get the animals his clients are after. He isn't a bragger; he just takes care of stuff. And he does it well. He might even let you into his trophy room. He seemed disappointed that he couldn't attach it to his house and have the roof lines work out, but I think that's probably good. His museum is a very oversized pole barn looking structure that could probably comfortably hold a couple of 747's. Bill has been fortunate to hunt in almost 40 countries and has collected over 300 different species of animals. He didn't want pictures taken inside since it has not been completed, but it was still very impressive. To top it off, he's doing all of the taxidermy and scenery himself. Like the other stuff that he does, the taxidermy looks great.

It looks like we might be able to have Bill attend our October 13th chapter meeting, and I think you'll be impressed. He should just be getting back from a 28 day hunt in Iran for four species of sheep, three species of goats, and some other native animals. I'm sure we can get him to talk about the W4 also, but don't expect bragging. I just remembered one thing that should have ticked me off! We went bass fishing in one of his ponds one afternoon and things were smoking. We went 20 minutes before we didn't have a strike on every cast. But Bill gave me the "good" rod with line that wanted to become a bird nest, rubber worms that wanted to flop out on the water about four feet from shore when casted, and hooks that didn't seem to hook the fish. The potlicker caught more fish than I did! I do make pretty bird nests though!

Good hunting

Ron

Editor's Comments

By Sally Ellis

"You what??? You were in South Africa for three weeks and you didn't hunt? Are you crazy?" Well, it's the truth! Jim and I spent three wonderful weeks of touring and not hunting. This is how it happened. While wintering in Florida, a friend and avid bird photographer from Ontario told us he and his wife were thinking of going to Kenya to take photographs of birds. That's all it took for us to jump into action and in about five short days, we had 17 people with deposits in hand ready to join us, and another eight on a waiting list! We then confirmed things in Reno at the national convention and added chapter member Lynn Marla to round the trip out to an even 20 travelers.

Chappie Scott did an outstanding job of guiding us around the Eastern and Western Capes, making last-minute itinerary changes to accommodate the weather. We then spent six nights at Zulu Nyala Game Lodge (owned by Trevor Shaw, long-time supporter of SCI) enjoying two game drives per day, including a couple evening drives.

It was very rewarding to see the excitement as the first-timers experienced the wonders of the Dark Continent. We dove with the Great Whites, we toured wineries, went to national parks, played with the cheetahs at a rehab center, etc. At Addo Elephant Park, we saw lions feasting on a fresh kill in the golden light as the sun was preparing to set. At Zulu Nyala, we watched a stand-off



power struggle between three elephants and two rhinos which lasted probably 45 minutes, and also had the opportunity to view a mother cheetah with her five cubs.

This was our fourth trip to South Africa, and I could go again tomorrow! But I'd probably take my 7 mm mag this time!

LAC/SCI Board of Directors

At the June 9th Chapter Meeting, two new members were elected to the Lansing Area Chapter Board of Directors: Mary Browning and Mike Hoskins. We welcome their new faces and trust they will add new and creative dimension to the board. Thanks to Linda Schroeder for your services; you will be missed.

A little about Mary Browning: I have been on the board for Verndale Lakes for over a year. Also when I worked for the State of Michigan, I went to colleges and high schools either training counselors or speaking to students about skills needed to obtain financial aid and what is out there for them. I feel I can contribute some expertise in fund raising and other activities SCI does. Since I am retired I have the time now to devote to this Chapter.

A little background on Mike Hoskins: I have held many board and leadership positions – Assistant Church Treasurer, Church Elder/Board Member, Church Budget committee, Board member of an International Mission, Branch and Later Area manager for 2 Fortune 500 Corporations. I have lead and organized many short and long term private and corporate events – Multiple 2 week, 1000 bike tours for 40 teens and staff, Multiple outing and events for 25 – 400 participants, staff and/or customers, wild game dinners with up to 325 attendees. Currently, I own and manage 2 businesses (one established, one start-up), Local Church Treasurer, CEO J of Hoskins Family – wife and 3 kids (14, 11, 8) I think the local SCI organization, the people running it, and the projects/causes that SCI Lansing focuses on is reason to consider playing a more committed role. I can learn from and contribute to the organization.

CHAPTER RECORD BOOK

This year – 2011 -- our Lansing Area Chapter will update the African section of our record book, and we encourage all members to participate. It is a tribute to the animal taken as well as the hunter to be included in our record book, and we welcome all entries. There is no minimum score.

Send your SCI scoring forms for animals in the above category to Glenn Belyea, 8051 Clark Road, Bath, MI 48808 by October 1, 2011. If your trophies have not been scored, contact one of our chapter scorers listed below.

Participate, join in the fun, and enter your animals in our chapter record book.

Tom Belloli	Official	517-339-1052	Haslett
Glenn Belyea	Official	517-641-4224	Bath
Terry Braden	Master	517-655-4157	Williamston
Gary Bradish	Official	517-676-4965	Mason
Ken Johnston	Master	517-349-2976	Okemos
Ron Lanford	Master	517-278-5667	Coldwater
Jim Leonard	Official	517-323-3361	Lansing
Mike Leonard	Official	734-231-3226	Dexter
John Murray	Official	517-627-2147	Grand Ledge
Tim Torpey	Official	989-382-7089	Barrington

IOWA DURING THE RUT

By Ron R. Maguire

It was Mid-November and gun season was open in Michigan, so I hit the road to Eastern Iowa for the best time to archery hunt – the rut! We were heading to Andy Wulf’s Whitetail Ridge Outfitters.

The first morning we awoke to rain. Since we were filming a hunt for the “American Archer” show, we decided we would hunt a ground blind. With the ground blind we were sure not to get the camera wet. On our way out of the blind that evening, Andy grabbed the card from the Cuddle Back camera on the tree stand he



had planned on us hunting that first morning. What did the camera reveal? A 150 10-point walked by at 7:30, and here we had been sitting in the ground blind . . . opps!

By the next day the rain had moved out, and it was time to sit in a tree stand. After two days of watching smaller bucks chase does around, the action kicked in. On the third morning about an hour after daylight broke, we spotted the above mentioned buck. It was with a doe and a fawn. We watched him chase and chase all morning, taking time to lie down and rest, and then resume his pursuit. Watching this from 100 yards away was quite entertaining. About noon, they made their way over a ridge and were gone. Or were they? After a quiet two hours and the sun warming us up, over the ridge they came: fawn, doe and rutting buck! By the time we got set up, the doe was right under the tree stand with the buck on her tail. With a soft grunt to stop him for just a second to get the shot off, the Rage broad head was on its way. A perfect shot; the buck went only 60 yards and all captured on tape! What a fun and productive day!

If you are looking for a great spot in Iowa to hunt, Andy Wulf is the whitetail man. He has a great set-up and treats you wonderfully. Thanks, Andy! Also, if you get a chance this fall, look for this hunt on “Dead Down Wind’s American Archer.”

ARIZONA IN JANUARY

By Ron Maguire

As we left the Grand Rapids airport in a snow storm and landed in Tucson with the blue skies and sun, I knew it

was going to be a very exciting week.

There is nothing more fun than to spot and stalk mule deer with a bow, and that’s what we were going to do this week in the Arizona desert, just north of the Mexican border.

The sun was on the rise the very first morning, and we were already at the top of a mountain trying to spot some rutting mule deer chasing does. January is the rut in the Southwest for mule deer.

Our guide and outfitter this week was Keith Hubbard of Arizona Hunting Adventures, and he had already spotted a nice 4x4 muley with some does – a great way to start the day.

That particular buck had finally picked one of the does and was headed to a quiet spot. When we knew they were lying down for the day, the camera man (we were there to film a hunt for the “American Archer Show”) and I were ready for the first stalk. It was going perfectly until we got to the bottom of the valley. We found it was much thicker than it looked from the top of the mountain. As we moved in, the doe spotted us first – and the first stalk was over.

We made our way back to Keith and decided to head over to the next valley and see if anything was still moving there. After glassing the area and seeing nothing to chase, we moved up to the top of the mountain to get a better view.

As we were getting comfortable on the side of the mountain with the sun in our faces, Keith tapped me on the shoulder to let me know the 4x4 that we had stalked that morning was coming right up at us. His mind was on finding another doe, and he never knew we were there! To our amazement he kept coming and coming. This was not your normal hunt – when the mule deer comes to you. This just proves you never know what’s going to happen during the rut. Keith told us both to get ready because the muley was now under 100 yards and still coming. When he got to 50 yards, I gave a whistle to get him to stop and then I let the Bowtech Captain and Rage broad head do its job. Wow – did that happen fast and this was all still before the sun had set on the first day!!!



For the next four days, we chased javalina all over the Arizona mountains and watched the Border Patrol drive and fly all around us. Those little javalinas are very tough to get with a bow, but very fun!

A big thank you goes out to Keith Hubbard with Arizona Hunting Adventures for a great hunt. Check him out if you want to keep hunting in January and also look for the show this summer on “Dead Down Wind’s American Archer.”

BIRTHDAY BEAR

By Tom Nelson

When one thinks about birthdays and how to celebrate this eventful date, many ideas come to mind. Surprise bashes, exotic trips, lavish jewelry, cakes and other assorted gifts. Well, with a special birthday forthcoming (did someone surmise a 50th) my wife Beth mentioned that she thought a bear hunt would be great fun. Without giving her any real time to ponder her comments, I was on the phone to Rob Nye, my favorite bear outfitter from Saskatchewan. Before we hung up the phones, Beth was booked on a 6 day spring bear hunt.

With less than a month to prepare, Beth faithfully practiced with her bow every day. We reviewed bear anatomy, shot placement and what to expect on her upcoming hunt. Now Beth is no stranger to bowhunting. In fact she has taken some 30 plus big game animals with a bow. Her only concern was field judging these black bruins. I had told her earlier just how difficult bears can be to judge, especially, sows from boars and adolescents from mature animals. She admitted albeit she really wanted to tag a bear, she wanted it to be a good one.

Our first day in bear camp was gloomy, cool and misty. Not exactly great bear hunting conditions. Beth, however, was eager to go; so with a bow in her hand and video camera in mine, we took off with Rob Nye for a long quad ride to Beth's bait site for the afternoon hunt. That first evening the wind blew and the tree we were perched in swayed wildly. Nary a bear showed face that first evening, and I did not blame them. Perhaps tomorrow I told Beth, and we left the stand.

Although the weather remained a bit dicey over the next few days, bears began to show up at the baits we were sitting over. The third afternoon we had five five different bears come and go, including a beautiful cinnamon bear that we deemed a shooter for someone next year. I gave Beth credit, as one of the bears was a nice mature boar that I guessed would weigh over 200 pounds. She passed on him and the others as once again she stated, "We still have three days and I want a good one." I told her not many hunters would have passed on the color phase bear she had on the bait. She just shrugged her shoulders at my comment.

The afternoon of the fifth day we moved to a site some 30 miles from camp. It had yet to be hunted and Rob's trail camera revealed an assortment of bears was visiting the bait. After a lengthy Argo ride across beaver dams and swamps, we arrived at the site. With a thumbs up, Rob departed. As the sound of the Argo began to fade, a black bear appeared off to our left. The bear almost ran to the bait barrel and began to feed almost before Beth nocked an arrow. The bear

was not quite as tall as the 55 gallon drum so Beth passed on him. Within moments another bear appeared, then another. Before long we had seen eight different bears, all respectable bears, but not what Beth wanted.

With an hour of shooting light left on day five, Beth whispered to me, wondering if she should have arrowed one of the bears that we had passed on earlier. I shook my head and told her she will get a big one, just wait. Then she drew to attention and mouthed the words "big bear". Glancing over my shoulder, I spied a good bear slowly approaching the bait. The other bears scattered as he drew near. Needing no coaxing, Beth grabbed her bow and readied herself for a possible shot. The big boar was wary and circled the bait. Twice he came almost to the barrel, only to turn and walk away. Finally, he came in and sniffed the barrel. As he turned broadside Beth came to full draw. The bear looked in our direction, perhaps sensing something was amiss. It was too late, however, as Beth's arrow passed though the bruin's boiler room. With a growl the bear spun around and made a hasty retreat into the dense bush. In just seconds we heard him pile up and then the eerie death moan. The bear traveled less than 50 yards after Beth's well placed arrow.

A shaking Beth gave me an awkward hug in the treestand. She was as excited as I had ever seen her. After a short track job and numerous photos, Beth finally said, "I did it!" "Yes you did", I replied. "You were patient, stayed upbeat and focused and made a great shot under pressure. Happy Birthday." Frankly, I could not have been more proud even had I shot the bear myself.

Beth's bear skull measured just shy of 19" which will easily place it in the record book. Rob Nye runs perhaps the best bear camp I have been in. Believe me, I have been in a bunch. His success rate is 98% with almost 80% of bears taken, record book quality. I am planning a husband/wife hunt with Rob next spring. Gun, bow, muzzleloader. If you are interested and, of course, your spouse, come tag along. Rob's camp is perfect for this as he has a wonderful lodge with separate bedrooms, internet, big bathrooms and great dining.



Osceola Turkey 2011

By: Jim Houthoofd

It was a bucky night as I settled in at the Budget Inn Motel in St. Cloud. I was a little late but no worse for the wear, as our non-stop flight out of Detroit was delayed about four hours. Note to the Delta ground crew: I guess you need to be careful when pushing away a 737 so that you don't bend the steering on the nose gear. But finally, I had gotten Nancy tucked in at the Buena Vista Palace and drove 30 minutes south to meet up with Tom Belloli for our adventure with John Partin of Canoe Creek Outfitters. John is actually a bona fide cattle rancher, but spends a few of his weeks in the spring chasing Osceola turkeys on his family ranch. While I'm not sure of the exact size, I can attest that it is at least 10,000 acres of prime land and has upward of 800-1,000 head of cattle. Dreams of strutting Osceola gobblers were vivid in my mind as I drifted off to sleep that night. It was a bucky night!

Morning came early as Tom (Belloli not turkey – pun intended) roused me from my comfy bed on Friday morning. "It's nearly five o'clock, buddy – time to go shoot a turkey!" Staying in St. Cloud has some advantages, like getting every last minute of sleep. I was able to hose off some of the all night cheese in the shower and get out to the ranch by 5:30 am. Tom and I split up and my guide was Brent, a great guy and best friend to John. Brent took me to the spot where he had roosted some birds, only to find that they had moved to a position about 300 yards away. After a little calling, it was clear that the birds were quite smart and more interested in the hens they were with than two guys pretending to be turkeys off in the distance.

Three or four set ups later, I was getting worried that the three day hunt might actually last three days and end without success. We bumped birds left, right and center while we drove and walked around. We saw lots of hens, some jakes and a small number of wise old toms, as we made our rounds to the most likely spots. It was late in the season and maybe the birds were wise to our tactics.

At about 10:00 am on the way to one of the food plots, we stopped short, parked the truck and walked in. Brent must have super human hearing as he froze in his tracks and asked if "I had heard that"? "Heard what?" was as good as I could muster. He scrambled to the front of a big green bush and had us sit in front of it. As soon as he began calling, the big black gobbler responded in a thunderous return call. It only took five minutes

but the big tom covered 100 yards like a sprinter as he came straight toward us gobbling to every call along the way.

I saw the lone tom come around the corner and down the lane, but as soon as Brent saw him, he whispered "Shoot him". Brent must have thought I was crazy as he repeated his mantra "shoot him" over and over as the turkey came to 40 yards, 35 yards, 30 yards and I let the big black tom strut his way in. As the long beard got to within



25 yards, I lined up my Williams Fire Sights and the turkey stretched to see where the calls were coming from and pulled the trigger on the 3 1/2" Remington Model 11-87. Later, Brent would joke at lunch that "Jim rolled him over – it was beautiful!"

Tom connected on the second day, bringing in an almost identical 20 pounder with a 10 inch beard and nearly 1 1/2 inch spurs. It was a very bucky night!



Calendar

August 4, 2011
Chapter Picnic
Capital Area Sportsman's Club

September 21, 2011
Board Meeting

October 13, 2011
Chapter Meeting
Eagle Eye

November 9, 2011
Board Meeting

December 15, 2011
Whitetail Night
Eagle Eye Upper Level

January 4, 2012
Board Meeting

February 1, 2012
Board Meeting

February 9, 2012
Chapter Meeting
Eagle Eye

March 7, 2012
Board Meeting

March 23, 2012
Outfitter Night
Eagle Eye

March 24, 2012
Fundraiser Banquet
Eagle Eye

Michigan: Hunter Heritage Bills Signed into Law

Yesterday, July 20, Governor Rick Snyder signed into law the Hunter Heritage Act, allowing youth hunters to get in the field at an earlier age, under the direct supervision of an adult mentor hunter. Senate Bill 207, sponsored by state Senator Joseph Hune (R-22), and House Bill 4371, sponsored by state Representative Peter Pettalia (R-106), establish a mentored youth hunting program allowing parents to determine at which age their kids are ready to hunt.

Since the Families Afield initiative was launched nationally in 2005, there have been approximately 600,000 hunters safely added to the field. In fact, studies have shown that mentored hunters are one of the safest recreational groups. Michigan ranks last in the nation when it comes to the recruitment and retention of hunters, and SB 207/HB 4371 promises to reverse that dismal statistic by adding thousands of hunters to Michigan's bountiful fields and forests. The Hunter Heritage Act is modeled after a similar Pennsylvania law that has succeeded in getting many youth involved in hunting with a mentor while learning proper safety and ethics at a young age – a try-before-you-buy approach.

We thank Governor Snyder for signing youth hunting legislation into law, and we also thank all of the NRA members who contacted their state legislators in support of SB 207 and HB 4371.

Posted: 7/21/2011 11:55:52 AM NRA website

Why we shoot deer in the wild

(A letter from someone who wants to remain anonymous, who farms, writes well and actually tried this)

I had this idea that I could rope a deer, put it in a stall, feed it up on corn for a couple of weeks, then kill it and eat it. The first step in this adventure was getting a deer. I figured that, since they congregate at my cattle feeder and do not seem to have much fear of me when we are there (a bold one will sometimes come right up and sniff at the bags of feed while I am in the back of the truck not 4 feet away), it should not be difficult to rope one, get up to it and toss a bag over its head (to calm it down) then hog tie it and transport it home.

I filled the cattle feeder then hid down at the end with my rope. The cattle, having seen the roping thing before, stayed well back. They were not having any of it. After about 20 minutes, my deer showed up -- 3 of them. I picked out a likely looking one, stepped out from the end of the feeder, and threw my rope. The deer just stood there and stared at me. I wrapped the rope around my waist and twisted the end so I would have a good hold.

The deer still just stood and stared at me, but you could tell it was mildly concerned about the whole rope situation. I took a step towards it, it took a step away. I put a little tension on the rope ... and then received an education. The first thing that I learned is that, while a deer may just stand there looking at you funny while you rope it, they are spurred to action when you start pulling on that rope.

That deer EXPLODED. The second thing I learned is that pound for pound, a deer is a LOT stronger than a cow or a colt. A cow or a colt in that weight range I could fight down with a rope and with some dignity. A deer-- no chance. That thing ran and bucked and twisted and pulled. There was no controlling it and certainly no getting close to it. As it jerked me off my feet and started dragging me across the ground, it occurred to me that having a deer on a rope was not nearly as good an idea as I had originally imagined. The only upside is that they do not have as much stamina as many other animals. A brief 10 minutes later, it was tired and not nearly as quick to jerk me off my feet and drag me when I managed to get up. It took me a few minutes to realize this, since I was mostly blinded by the blood flowing out of the big gash in my head. At that point, I had lost my taste for corn-fed venison. I just wanted to get that devil creature off the end of that rope. I figured if I just let it go with the rope hanging around its neck, it would likely die slow and painfully somewhere. At the time, there was no love at all between me and that deer. At that moment, I hated the thing, and I would venture a guess that the feeling was mutual. Despite the gash in my head and the several large knots where I had cleverly arrested the deer's momentum by bracing my head against various large rocks as it dragged me across the ground, I could still think clearly enough to recognize that there was a small chance that I shared some tiny amount of responsibility for the situation we were in. I didn't want the deer to have to suffer a slow death, so I managed to get it lined back up in between my truck and the feeder - a little trap I

had set beforehand...kind of like a squeeze chute. I got it to back in there and I started moving up so I could get my rope back. Did you know that deer bite? They do! I never in a million years would have thought that a deer would bite somebody, so I was very surprised whenI reached up there to grab that rope and the deer grabbed hold of my wrist. Now, when a deer bites you, it is not like being bit by a horse where they just bite you and slide off to then let go. A deer bites you and shakes its head--almost like a pit bull. They bite HARD and it hurts. The proper thing to do when a deer bites you is probably to freeze and draw back slowly. I tried screaming and shaking instead. My method was ineffective.

It seems like the deer was biting and shaking for several minutes, but it was likely only several seconds. I, being smarter than a deer (though you may be questioning that claim by now), tricked it. While I kept it busy tearing the tendons out of my right arm, I reached up with my left hand and pulled that rope loose. That was when I got my final lesson in deer behavior for the day. Deer will strike at you with their front feet. They rear right up on their back feet and strike right about head and shoulder level, and their hooves are surprisingly sharp... I learned a long time ago that, when an animal -- like a horse -- strikes at you with their hooves and you can't get away easily, the best thing to do is try to make a loud noise and make an aggressive move towards the animal. This will usually cause them to back down a bit so you can escape. This was not a horse. This was a deer, so obviously, such trickery would not work. In the course of a millisecond, I devised a different strategy. I screamed like a woman and tried to turn and run. The reason I had always been told NOT to try to turn and run from a horse that paws at you is that there is a good chance that it will hit you in the back of the head. Deer may not be so different from horses after all, besides being twice as strong and 3 times as evil, because the second I turned to run, it hit me right in the back of the head and knocked me down. Now, when a deer paws at you and knocks you down, it does not immediately leave. I suspect it does not recognize that the danger has passed. What they do instead is paw your back and jump up and down on you while you are laying there crying like a little girl and covering your head. I finally managed to crawl under the truck and the deer went away. So now I know why when people go deer hunting they bring a rifle with a scope.....to sort of even the odds!! All these events are true so help me God... An Educated Farmer

[Editor's comment: taken from a forwarded email. I wouldn't sign my name either! But after touring the breeding facility at Muy Grande Ranch and hearing the stories from Tom Selke, this surely doesn't surprise me.]



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